

Wine tourism data collection tool to boost DTC business for wineries

In a bid to boost Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) business for wineries, Vinpro and the Cape Winelands District Municipality have launched a new wine tourism research pilot programme. The programme aims to generate tourism intelligence, which will aid wineries in utilising the data to grow their business. The pilot, which kicked off in March, began with 16 wineries and is a continuation of Vinpro and the SA Wine Routes Forum's strategic objective to conduct industry-focused research.



Source: [Freepik](#)

The wine routes, Vinpro, and Vintelligence collaborated last year to release the SA Wine Tourism Visitor Research Report 2022. This year the goal is smarter use of technology.

"We are extremely excited to have kicked off this amazing pilot programme and we want cellars to get involved now," says Marisah Nieuwoudt, wine tourism manager at Vinpro.

"The new pilot programme was launched together with Flow Networks, specialists in location analytics, proximity marketing and Guest Wi-Fi. This year we want to use the technology to our advantage to count our visitors and note where they come from, to understand the size and make-up of the total market. We want to help our wineries stay connected to wine tourists between visits, making consumer engagement in the DTC wine space possible."

Tailored offers and personalised communication

A tasting room is both the heart of the DTC sales strategy and the conversion zone for future online sales, says Nieuwoudt. "The more data one can collect and record about customers, the better one can tailor offers and personalise communication."

Flow Networks will work with the cellars involved on their marketing strategy to assist with cross-channel sales, manage their online reputation, build a loyalty and rewards programme, or send offers via e-mail.

An online dashboard will display the visitor data collected. Selected, aggregated information such as visitor numbers, country of origin, dwell time, gender, and age will be shared with the respective wine route. This means the wine route manager will have sight of cross-pollination (when a wine tourist visits more than one winery) to help inform their marketing and development planning. Vinpro will have sight of the same information at a national level. All processes comply with POPIA locally and GDPR regulations abroad.

"As a region, we believe that wine tourism is not only about enjoying exquisite wines and breath-taking landscapes but also about harnessing the power of data and intelligence to support the growth of wineries and enhance our visitors' experiences," says Melody Botha, CEO Breedekloof Wine Valley.

"That's why we are proud to take part in the wine tourism research pilot programme. By participating in this programme, we aim to unlock valuable insights that can inform strategic decision-making for our wineries, enabling them to optimise their DTC business operations, improve customer engagement, and create memorable experiences for visitors. We recognise the potential of data-driven approaches to drive innovation and foster sustainable growth in the wine tourism industry.

Elevating wine tourism offerings

"We see this pilot programme as an opportunity to pool our collective knowledge and expertise, so we can elevate our wine tourism offerings and position our region as a premier wine destination. We envision a future where wineries in our region can thrive in the DTC market, and where visitors can have truly exceptional wine tourism experiences," Botha concluded.

A further 43 wineries in the Cape Winelands region have been earmarked to subscribe to Purple Presence Analytics and Purple Wi-Fi Analytics for a year at a subsidised rate. The project is open to all wineries beyond the Cape Winelands as well, who also qualify for a discounted rate.

"The tourism sector is one of the largest economic contributors in the Cape Winelands District.

"Between our mandated function of generating opportunities through local economic development and our role as Regional Tourism Office, this exciting and technologically advanced project ticks all the right boxes for the Cape Winelands District Municipality," says Dr Elna von Schlicht, executive mayor of the Cape Winelands District Municipality.

"We are honoured to be collaborating with this vibrant company. We are very eager to learn more about the visitors to our district. The information gathered will help us apply our resources to effective campaigns that expand our global market, attract visitors to our beautiful district and, ultimately, allow its people to flourish. I thank and commend Vinpro for their innovative thinking. This kind of thinking moves our wine and agricultural industry forward."